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# Homegrown Terrorism and the British Experience: A Historical Analysis of the Rise of British Muslim Radicalization

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**Homegrown Terrorism and the British Experience:**  
*A Historical Analysis of the Rise of British Muslim Radicalization*

By

Emma Rose Connolly

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for graduation with

DEPARTMENTAL HONORS  
in  
INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

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***Abstract:***

The rise in terrorist acts carried out by individuals who have been raised and radicalized within the Western countries they are attacking has increasingly become a common topic for study and conversation over the past few decades. With revelations that numerous British individuals have now joined the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria, the issue has heightened the interest of the British population and government. This study utilizes theories of revolution and psychological theories of radicalization in order to analyze the rise in homegrown terrorism within the British context on three levels: the societal, the global, and the individual. This examination demonstrates that while multiple variables are involved, they are interacting and contingent, showing that isolation of a single aspect cannot lead to a full understanding of how and why this situation has arisen. A historical review shows that immigration and other externally originated forces helped create dysfunction in the British social system, which, combined with the influence of globalization, has allowed the process of radicalization to take root. The study concludes that this disequilibrium is a result of misalignment of the values of the population and the socioeconomic structure of the society, which, if not corrected, will potentially allow situations such as these to develop.

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## Preface

Only through hindsight can we identify the ways in which the horrific terrorist actions seen by our generation could have been avoided. While it is important to understand how radical ideologies have been allowed to inspire such attacks, this analysis does not serve to place blame on any particular country, group, religion, or individual. Instead, this study demonstrates that there are innumerable factors that interdependently contribute to the arrival of the British and the global population at its current state.

It is my hope that by understanding these factors it may become more clear the role that we all play—as individuals, as citizens, and as nations.

*“Pointing to another world will never stop vice among us;  
shedding light over this world can alone help us”*

—Walt Whitman

## **Introduction**

In the years since September 11, the state of Islamic extremism and the viability of terrorist threats have become common topics in global academic discourse on national and international security. In 2014 and the beginning of 2015, we have seen an escalation in the public conversation due to the threat of the Islamic State and the recent attacks in Australia, Africa, and France. Over the past decade, intellectuals have identified homegrown terrorism as a growing threat to the protection of national interests, and the case of ISIS, or ISIL, has offered the perfect example of its prevalence. Intelligence officials in the United States believe there are around 7,000 foreigners fighting with the militant group in Syria, though they have only been able to identify close to a dozen American citizens of those involved (Briggs 2014). It is estimated that of those foreign fighters, nearly 2,000 Europeans are fighting for the Islamic State, at least 400 of which were thought to be citizens of the United Kingdom as of October 2014 (Jamieson 2014). This number has since risen to an estimate of 20,000 foreign fighters overall with 600 now believed to be British citizens (Sharma 2015). While it is heavily stressed that exact numbers and information on these foreign fighters are extremely difficult to verify at this time due to the nature of the conflict, the seemingly high number of participants from Britain has caused government concern.

While current information concerning the Islamic State is unclear, it is widely recognized in the academic community that over the past few decades, the number of British sympathizers to Islamic terrorism has rivaled that of many of their Western counterparts, with the exception of France. Recent statistics show that five British citizens are leaving the country every week to join the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria

(Malik and Gardham 2014). It is now believed that twice as many Muslim British nationals are fighting for the militant group than are serving in the British Armed Forces (Grant and Sharkov 2014). In addition to those joining the Islamic State, others are known to have made connections with al Qaeda's Al-Nusra Front and the Katiba al-Muhajireen (RT UK 2014). The prevalence of British citizens in this issue has caused it to become an important area of investigation and debate among intellectuals in the United Kingdom and abroad. Why is it that British citizens in particular seem to be susceptible to Islamist radicalization when compared to nationals of other Western countries? Some cite profiling statistics of Islamist sympathizers in general, such as income level, education, mental disorders, religiosity, and more. Many blame a lack of integration of Muslim immigrant communities into British culture over the past fifty years, claiming British policy has been inefficient and dysfunctional in this regard. Others argue that the United Kingdom has long been considered a state that is relatively accepting of religious diversity and freedom, providing a safe haven in which radicalism was able to take root. While there are varying levels of analysis and theoretical lenses through which this issue may be analyzed, no single study has been viewed as complete in its conclusions.

The research presented here will demonstrate that dysfunction in British society created the circumstances under which a rise of radicalization was able to take place. A period of high immigration in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century disrupted the established functions of British society. The British government then proved unable to correct this disruption with effective policy reform, especially with regard to the integration of the Muslim immigrant community into the larger society and its institutions. This sustained dysfunction was exacerbated by international events involving the global Islamic

community, creating a situation easily exploited by influential actors of Islamist extremism. Under these circumstances, the radicalization of British nationals was able to take root, bringing the country and its people to their current situation.

## **Chapter 1: Methodology and Research Design**

This research will take a highly interdisciplinary approach in its analysis, primarily consulting psychological research and theories of revolution and social systems, followed by a theoretically guided historical analysis. This will take place on three separate but overlapping levels of analysis: the societal, global, and individual.

The primary independent variable studied here is the dysfunction in British society. In order to assess and measure the level of “dysfunction” in the country, this study will utilize Chalmers Johnson’s theory of revolution and his application of Talcott Parsons’ criteria for a well-functioning social system. These are “pattern maintenance”, “adaptation to the environment”, “goal attainment”, and “integration and social control”, each of which will be discussed in depth in the theoretical framework chapter.

In demonstrating the presence of dysfunction through these “functional needs”, Johnson’s work will be further applied to explain how the British system arrived at such a state of dysfunction. This analysis requires a consideration of what Johnson referred to as changes to the “socioeconomic environment”, the “value structure”, and the relationship between the two, referred to in its ideal state as “homeostatic equilibrium”. Part of Johnson’s work involves a consideration of the exogenous and endogenous pressures that cause this relationship to become unbalanced; that is, forces originating externally or internally to the society, respectively. This will involve a discussion of globalization and the sources of change that have facilitated such an increase in cultural contact between Britain and other countries of the world.

The third level of analysis, the consideration of the individual, will also be explored using Johnson’s theory, which describes the relationship between the system of

the human individual and the social system of which it is a member. While this has often been viewed as another independent variable, it will be analyzed here as one whose impact is dependent on the state of the previously mentioned variable of dysfunction. To gain further insight into how the individual interacts, influences, and is influenced by his or her environment in such a situation, the work of Ted Gurr and his theory of “relative deprivation” will be utilized alongside the work of various theorists of radicalization. While the radicalization theories will be given a separate section within the theoretical framework chapter, a discussion of how they complement and overlap with the work of Johnson, Parsons, and Gurr will be presented, ultimately demonstrating the consequential links between the global, the societal, and the individual in the process of radicalization.

The global level of analysis is accounted for within the framework of Johnson’s theory, giving recognition to the amount of influence forces external to the society can have on domestic affairs and functions. This is accounted for in the discussion of “exogenous sources of change”, viewing these external forces as contributing to the rise of disequilibrium in the social system. Additionally, globalization, or the increased interaction and exchange of cultural products across state boundaries, has a profound influence on the dissemination of ideologies. The processes of globalization, then, create a direct link between the individual, societal, and global levels of analysis. This will be addressed in the sections on exogenous sources of change and that of the individual level in the British experience.

Following a discussion and explanation of these theories and their relevance, they will be applied directly to the British case. Here it will be shown how the society arrived at its state of dysfunction, defining it through the terms of Johnson and Parsons, giving

examples of specific events and of the experience of the Muslim immigrant communities over the past fifty years. This will include a discussion of their marginalization, socioeconomic status, and relationship to the British government and its institutions. Next, an examination of the reaction of the British government to this dysfunction through policy change, implementation, and enforcement will be presented, discussing why such actions did or did not contribute to a correction of the social system.

The ways in which the British Muslim community reacted to this dysfunction will follow, including an examination of their relationship with the larger society and then with the global community. This will include public opinion data from various years on the attitudes of British Muslims representing different generations toward issues such as discrimination, institutional efficiency, foreign policy, and cultural and religious identity. Additionally, an analysis of the role of educational institutions, religion, and global relationships will be necessary, each of which are factors that will connect the global and societal levels to individual experience. Using the psychological theories from the theoretical framework chapter of Ted Gurr and others, these factors will be explained in the context of the larger process of radicalization, demonstrating how individuals and small groups were able undergo this process due to the state of British society.

## **Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework**

### *Theories of Revolution*

Theorists of revolution have attempted to explain, through numerous methods and lenses of analysis, why movements for the overthrow of an existing power structure occur, how they occur, and what is necessary for their success. In this paper, terrorism will be considered as a strategy of revolution, meaning that a study of why and how revolutions occur can offer insight into how and why the rise of terrorist motivations has occurred in Britain over the course of the past half-century. However, it is important to first establish the type of revolutionary theory that will be utilized.

Most theories of revolution focus on a specific component, such as actor-oriented theories. These look at what types of personalities and individual actors are likely to ascribe to revolutionary action and how they are able to influence a larger movement. Structural theories, on the other hand, focus on how normal individuals respond and react to unusual situations within certain political and social contexts. By focusing on certain variables, these theories have their strengths and weaknesses. Both can say much more about their area of expertise than other theories can, but they are only able to explain certain factors of revolution and not others. Structural theories often do not account for the role of individual diversity and require time as they are best applied retroactively, just as actor-oriented approaches are limited to their specific cases and are not easily applied cross-culturally. For example, the actor-oriented work of frustration-aggression hypotheses, including that of James C. Davies and Ted Gurr, explains very well how aggression arises from changing expectations, though it does not continue on to explain where this aggression will be directed or how. Structural theorists, such as Theda

Skocpol, Samuel Huntington, and Barrington Moore, explain political relationships, socioeconomic causes, and the influence of economic structure on revolutionary outcomes, respectively. Each has contributed valuable insight into the understanding of why men rebel, but independently they are unable to provide a full picture (Johnson 1982, 171-178).

Other theorists have tried to avoid this isolation of variables, combining structural and actor-oriented views to create conjunction theories, such as that of Crane Brinton. These frameworks, and Brinton's specifically, explain the process of revolution in stages, proposing that certain events occurring in a certain order lead to revolution. However, these explanations find difficulty in explaining the cases that do not fit perfectly into this progression. Additionally, they do not consider how each of these stages interact with and influence one another in any other order than that which is presented. Contingency theories, however, consider the strengths and weaknesses of conjunction theories and choose to emphasize the ways in which the influence of each of these commonly studied variables is contingent on what occurs to the others (Johnson 1982, 178-185). Chalmers Johnson offers one such theory, combining multiple levels of analysis to explain how a society arrives at a revolutionary situation and what is necessary for its progression to a revolutionary outcome. He proposes that a social system faced with internal and external pressures may eventually become dysfunctional, given their failure to evolve. This disorients the behavior of the system's members to the point that psychological processes, influenced by the structural dysfunction, lead some individuals to adopt ideologies defined by their motivation to rebel against the existing social system and replace it with another. In short, revolution is an act of desperation taken when the social

system fails at evolution. This explanation combines structural and psychological perspectives while accounting for the influence of external forces on internal affairs. Such an interdisciplinary and comprehensive theoretical framework is better able to provide a full understanding of the various factors involved in the unfolding of a revolutionary movement.

The case of Islamist terrorism itself is not regularly studied through the lenses of revolutionary theory. However, by Chalmers Johnson's terms, it can be and should be considered as such, wherein a portion of the British citizenry has radicalized to rebel against existing political structures. The British citizens involved in this type of extremism have adopted what Johnson considers a "revolutionary ideology", which will be discussed at length in this chapter. This involves an accepted "goal culture", or the structure of society they would like to put in place, and a "transfer culture", which involves accepted understandings of what must be done to reach the goal culture and how those actions can be carried out (Johnson 1982, 125-138). As we understand Islamist extremism today, the ultimate goal is the dissolution of those forms of government that are not based in the political model of Sharia law and their replacement with a global Islamic state (Mauro 2014). In this context, terrorism is a strategy of the revolutionary ideology these extremists have adopted (Johnson 1982, 152-168). As the case of British Islamic extremism can be understood as "revolutionary" by these terms, Johnson's theory can place its development within a structural and global environment, each of which are necessary to fully understanding how such an initiative was able to grow within the British state.

### *The Social System*

Chalmers Johnson formulated an understanding of what a society is and how it is formed by consulting and critiquing various political, philosophical, and psychological pieces of work, such as those of Montesquieu, Aristotle, Thomas Hobbes, Marx, Ralf Dahrendorf, Weber, Durkheim, and numerous others. What has resulted of this thorough research is a view of society as a “social system” composed of various independent but interacting variables (Johnson 1982, 41). The most important point Johnson makes about the structure of society is that it is not solely determined by a single force, as is believed by coercion theorists. Rather, it is also heavily influenced by a structure of values and its relationship to the socioeconomic environment (Johnson 1982, 20). These two independent variables interact to form the division of labor.

Johnson posits that a human society is a “moral community” in which values, or “shared definitions of the situation”, are a variable that influences the society’s social organization and integration (Johnson 1982, 21). Values are essential to the social functioning of a society due to the ways in which they provide meaning for social action and explanations of reality (Johnson 1982, 26). Through this structure of values, roles are created that define the socially accepted responsibilities and privileges of any given individual. Such expectations allow members of the society to decide what actions they will take and how they can expect others to behave (Johnson 1982, 42). Roles, then, become the dynamic component of the division of labor and are regulated by role requirements, or norms. These norms are the guidelines for expected performance within a given role and are “inspired and legitimized” by the value structure, creating a range of acceptable social behavior within which socialized members of the society are expected

to act (Johnson 1982: 43). When the value structure and the socioeconomic environment are aligned, these norms will be a direct reflection of the values of the society, meaning that these “rules for behavior” will be respected naturally and rarely violated. If these two are not aligned, however, the instance of violation will increase, as the restrictions on behavior are no longer rooted in values (Johnson 1982, 44).

A natural hierarchical structure will develop to organize these roles in order to avoid conflict in role differentiation and assignment. This order is itself a product of the value structure, because the position of a given role in relation to others is based on the societal value assigned to it. This static component of the division of labor is status, and such an organization is also dependent on the balanced relationship between the value structure and environment, much like societal norms (Johnson 1982, 45). These three components, roles, social organization, and status, are all products of the value-environment relationship and make up the larger social system.

As the efficacy of these three factors is dependent on the balance between the value structure and the socioeconomic environment, a well-functioning social system is considered to be in equilibrium where these variables are synchronized. When changes occur in one, a corresponding change must occur in the other if equilibrium is to be maintained (Johnson 1982, 57). A healthy system will enjoy a “homeostatic equilibrium”, where a societies norms, institutions, and roles interact in such a way that an issue in one may be corrected by another through “homeostatic processes”. Such a process is only possible when value sharing is present (Johnson 1982, 55). With these corrections, changes are being made to the social structure, though they are small and made without a direct intention. This type of change is considered “evolutionary” and is able to sustain

the state of equilibrium (Johnson 1982, 59). The possibility for changes that are unable to be corrected in this way lead us to a discussion of disequilibrium and what the system may become vulnerable to once this imbalance occurs.

### *The Disequilibrated Social System*

Various changes may occur to either the socioeconomic environment or to the value structure, causing their relationship to become unsynchronized. Johnson proposes two categories of sources for such change, endogenous (those changes originating within the system itself) and exogenous (those occurring as a result of cultural contact), each of which may impact either the environment or the value structure. An exogenous source of change to the value structure may stem from international communication, war relations, foreign political or religious actors and groups, and other forms of cultural contact (Johnson 1982, 67). However, an impactful exogenous change to the value structure often requires an exogenous change to the environment first, which makes the system more open and vulnerable to these outside influences. An exogenous change to the environment would include imported technologies, skills or medical knowledge, immigration, and international diplomatic relations (Johnson 1982, 72).

Endogenous sources of value change, on the other hand, primarily occur through creative innovations and intellectual developments that directly impact the value structure (Johnson 1982, 68). These should not be confused with technological innovations, which would be an *exogenous* source of *environmental* change. Endogenous impacts on either sphere, environment or values, however, are by nature mutually influencing. For example, a technological innovation may cause a change to the environment, which could

then cause a change in the value structure as a homeostatic process. Additionally, the acceptance and implementation of the innovation itself depends on the value structure, as it could just as easily be rejected. Internal innovations can also often be expected, as innovation itself is “routinized” by the social system to a certain extent, encouraging it in certain areas over others, such as the arts (Johnson 1982, 69). With this existing expectation, an impact significant enough to cause a substantial change to the value structure is less likely, unless it were to come from within a marginal and unexpected group (Johnson 1982, 70).

When changes such as these are able to push the value structure and environment out of synchronicity, the social system must still be able to perform certain functions if it is to maintain its existence. To explain these requirements, Johnson applies Talcott Parsons’ four “functional needs”, of which the fourth Johnson highlights as the most crucial to the study of revolutions. First, the society must ensure “pattern maintenance” or “socialization”, where new members of the system, such as children or immigrants, are instilled with its existing values and norms. This occurs primarily within the family, educational institutions, and day-to-day participation in society. The second need involves the social system’s “adaptation to the environment”. Through the established structure of roles and norms, various processes must occur in order to maintain the value structure-environment relationship. Roles must be created and assigned and resources must be distributed based on the value structure and the society’s anticipation of changes to the environment, for which it must be prepared to adjust.

The third necessity laid out by Parsons is that of “goal attainment”. While a society as a whole has goals, often concerning its position relative to other societies, each

subset of that single system has particular goals, as well. Each actor and group of actors are motivated by various factors that will orient them toward certain ends, many of which will at times conflict with the ambitions of others or of the larger system. Therefore, the social system must operate in such a way that compromise and agreement is promoted, utilizing policy tools and management of resources to aid in the achievement of certain goals that satisfy the collective. Often, these compromises may be inauthentic, short-term solutions, but they must at least be able to mitigate disagreement for the time being.

The fourth and final of Parsons' requisites is "integration and social control". Though similar to the imparting of values in the first need, this involves the perpetuation of a system's values in order to allow for assimilation of the system's members. This need may be achieved "positively" through institutions that aid value dissemination, such as art, religion, judicial proceedings, political and social work, etc. The exercise of authority, especially that of the state, may also achieve this "negatively" when it is necessary to control conflict and abnormal, or deviant, behavior (Johnson 1982, 53). Anthony Wallace spoke of the need for integration as well, saying that it is a need for the "organization of [human] diversity" rather than an insistence on uniformity. This relates back to the need for "goal attainment", where the interests and backgrounds of diverse actors must be considered and processed to reach a compromise rather than conformity, in which the preservation of the system is the common goal. When this is true, diversity is accompanied by curiosity, rather than exclusion, which brings about trust in the social order.

While all four of these activities are necessary to the existence of the system, the fourth, "integration and social control", is a vital component to the prevention of

rebellion (Johnson 1982, 53). During a period of disequilibrium, where the value structure and the socioeconomic environment are moving further and further out of synch with one another, integration becomes increasingly difficult. At this point, the system has come to a “power deflation”, where the “nondeviant”, socialized members of society believe less and less in the capacity of the system’s leadership to correct the imbalance (Johnson 1982, 95). During this period, rising rates of deviancy and dissemination of ideologies will make integration and social control increasingly important, as well (Johnson 1982, 94). The only solution is effective intervention on the part of the state, through policies and tactics that will bring the system back to equilibrium (Johnson 1982, 54).

First, the power-holding elite must acknowledge that there exists a need to resynchronize the system. If this does not occur, the power deflation will persist until it is acknowledged at a later time or authority is lost (Johnson 1982, 95). The ruling elite can take a variety of actions from this point, which Johnson characterizes as ranging from “conservative change” to “complete intransigence”. Conservative change involves the use of effective policy or other means that cause change through existing, institutionalized pathways of influence. This requires that the elite have a thorough understanding of the social environment and the ability to discern the parts of the value structure most important to the maintenance of the system (Johnson 1982, 96). The policies themselves will also fall on a spectrum from “barely adequate” to “demonstrably incompetent”. According to Johnson, the most common form of “barely adequate” policy involves a relaxation of social mobility norms. A state of disequilibrium often involves a “status protest”, where actors occupying their roles perceive that status is no longer value-

derived, giving rise to resistance to the hierarchy (Johnson 1982, 45). When this opposition arises, it is often in the best interest of the elite to relax these norms of social mobility to include members of the protesting group. This method can potentially neutralize the group posing the greatest threat to the elite's authority by easing social tension (Johnson 1982, 98).

Incompetent policies will not be able to aid in realignment, though not because they are intentionally ineffective. Rather, policies of this sort are often the result of the elite's isolation from the rest of the social network, giving them inadequate familiarity with the situation. Leadership can still acknowledge this incompetence and avoid revolution through abdication (Johnson 1982, 99).

At the opposite end of the spectrum from conservative change, the ruling elite may also choose to pass policies or take action that is in direct conflict with the existing value structure, aggravating the existing imbalance of the system to the point where it may serve to bring about revolution rather than prevent it. This is Johnson's "elite intransigence" (Johnson 1982, 97). This carries a similar significance as a lack of elite acknowledgement or incompetent policy does as all three may lead to a complete loss of authority. Hannah Arendt and John Locke both considered the loss of authority to be the primary cause of revolution (Johnson 1982, 118). Johnson makes clear that it is an important factor, but does not weight it as heavily. He says that, when the socialized members of society have lost all faith in the competency of the system's leadership, the relationship between the elite and the rest of society is based solely on "deterrence".

In the deterrence relationship, the elite's power occupation becomes completely dependent on their use of force, of which they must maintain a monopoly. As long as

they are still able to control deviancy and protest behavior through force, though it may no longer be legitimate, they can remain in power without a revolution. This idea of legitimacy and authority is one that relies on the complementary relationship between the public and the elite, similar to the idea of social contract theory, where certain rights and responsibilities are reciprocally given (Johnson 1982, 117). As this relationship of authority and obedience is a product of the value system, it is already threatened when the system becomes disequibrated and a power deflation arises. Once authority is lost, the position of leadership will become contingent on this monopoly of armed force, as it is the only source of power left to its disposal.

Due to this caveat, Johnson insists that the loss of authority is not the immediate cause of a successful rebellion or revolution. Instead, he and many other theorists agree that there must be an event that makes clear the loss of the elite's monopoly of armed force, which Johnson refers to as "accelerators". He finds that there are three types of accelerators. A display of military weakness or disorder will render the armed forces available to the power-holding elites ineffective. A second type involves a protesting group within the society coming to believe and have confidence in their ability to overcome whatever force the elite may exercise. Third, an opposition group may take strategic action against the elite because of their perception that certain factors have presented a timely opportunity. The most important accelerator, however, is considered by Johnson to be a loss in war, as it communicates the armed force's ineffectiveness more acutely than some of the other possibilities (Johnson 1982, 101-106).

In short, Johnson's contingency theory proposes that in a period of disequilibrium, when a power deflation is met with a loss of elite authority and an

accelerator that removes their remaining monopoly of armed force, revolution will occur. Here we can distinguish between a revolutionary situation and a revolutionary outcome. All that has been discussed up to this point brings the social system to a revolutionary situation. What the result of the revolution will be, or the revolutionary outcome, will depend on a variety of factors, many of which come into play during the revolutionary conflict itself. The research of this paper looks primarily at why a form of revolution was able to occur. As a result, the theoretical focus will be on the revolutionary situation and its origins rather than its outcome, seeing as this is still unknown and constantly unfolding at this very moment.

#### *Johnson on the level of the Individual*

Johnson includes psychological theory in his work, acknowledging that the processes of cognitive change on the individual level are significant in the larger process of revolution. Due to a loss of equilibrium in the social system, individuals will become disoriented and attempt to cope with the imbalance in a variety of ways. In order to explore these cognitive processes, he consults Anthony Wallace, while making sure to highlight his theory's shortcomings. Johnson grants that this theory is one of the most operable and clear representations of how psychological changes occur during a period of disequilibrium and states that its weaknesses are made up for when it is used along with the "macrosystemic" analysis presented previously (Johnson 1982, 114).

Johnson's interpretation of Wallace's theory fits quite well into the structural level of analysis that we have already discussed. It consists of four stages ("steady state", "increased individual stress", "cultural distortion", and a "period of revitalization") that

culminate in what Wallace refers to as “revitalization”, or revolution at the psychological level. “Steady state”, the first stage, is what Johnson refers to as equilibrium in the social system. Here, deviant or criminal behavior occurs within acceptable limits and only in those individuals who are unable to cope with normal stresses to the system due to social or physical deficiencies, such as incomplete socialization or mental illness. The second stage, “increased individual stress”, arises when the same endogenous or exogenous sources of change discussed in the previous section influence the value structure or environment and cause disequilibrium. Johnson’s interpretation of this stage characterizes individual behavior as being only slightly more abnormal, where such behavior may even go unrecognized due to increasingly blurry understandings of crime and deviancy. Rather than deviant behavior, the most important manifestation of stress is an increase in the formulation of new ideologies. This occurs as more and more people seek ways in which to make sense of and correct the disorientation felt from the systemic imbalance.

“Cultural distortion” is the third stage, in which the pressures of the second stage reach a point where the impact on individual behavior is obvious. Members of society continue to adopt increasingly dysfunctional ways to restore “personal equilibrium” and, gradually, align themselves with various ideologies that begin to create social divisions. This stage may be the first visibly apparent change in a radicalization process from an outside perspective. The fourth stage is the “period of revitalization”. Due to the heightened levels of imbalance of the system, conservative change, while still possible, becomes increasingly difficult to achieve. As a result of this difficulty, it is most likely that the system will undergo revitalization or simply disintegrate (Johnson 1982, 112).

This fourth stage of revitalization is the most dynamic, particularly on the psychological level, and for this reason Wallace proposes five “requisite functions” within it, all of which are necessary for a complete change of the social system to occur. First, a revolutionary ideology must be constructed, or what Wallace refers to as the “formulation of a code”. This is necessary because it offers a “transfer culture” and a “goal culture” to the individuals unsettled by disequilibrium. The goal culture proposes a replacement for the now dysfunctional existing order. It functions as a possibility for change that can free the members of society from the pressures under which they currently are struggling. The transfer culture, then, offers the method through which they will be able to arrive at this change.

Once this ideology is created, it must be communicated throughout the society by its “formulators” with the goal of converting others and gaining followers. The actors in this second requirement have undergone varying degrees of psychological change, or what Wallace refers to as changes to the personal “mazeway”. Those that created the ideology, the “formulators”, go through “mazeway resynthesis”: a change in thought and understanding that is considered irreversible. These individuals are most like religious prophets who are secure in their faith and practice and unlikely to experience a radical reformulation of their beliefs. Those that are converted by these individuals, on the other hand, experience “hysterical conversion”, where their psychological change is likely to have more rapid, emotionally driven, and ongoing. This type of change is more easily reversed and therefore requires regular encouragement (Johnson 1982, 114).

Once the ideology has become the core of the relationship between the formulators, the converts, and the followers, this system of relationships becomes

organized hierarchically, often with a charismatic leader symbolizing the cause. After this third requisite has been adequately achieved, the transfer culture is able to develop into an actual strategy, orienting the actions of the organized ideological group towards the goal culture. This fourth requirement is called “adaptation”. Here, the group makes clear its antagonism toward their ideologically defined enemy and those that claim to be a subscriber to the ideology while failing to fully participate. These four factors allow for the commencement of “cultural transformation”, or the official attempt to put the transfer culture into effect (Johnson 1982, 112).

Strategy, or the transfer culture, is a part of a revolutionary movement that carries a great deal of significance, not only in how it will impact the revolutionary outcome, but also in what it says about the relationship of the revolting group to the power-holding elites. Johnson expands on this point within his emphasis on accelerators at the advent of a revolution, a concept Wallace does not address. A strategy, according to Johnson, is the result of a “rational calculation” of the capabilities of the elites and the force available for them to utilize. This calculation allows for the formulation of courses of action to neutralize their defensive efforts (Johnson 1982, 140). Based on this tactical understanding of the situation, a strategy can often determine what the accelerator, or immediate cause of the revolution, will be. For example, Johnson says that a sufficient accelerator may be the perception on the part of the revolutionaries that they have the ability or an opportunity to weaken or overcome the elite’s monopoly of force (Johnson 1982, 138). In order for this perception to even occur, the revolutionaries must have had some prior idea of what was required for this to be true, which necessitates a premeditated strategy and observation. A strategy can take the form of a coup d’état,

guerrilla warfare, terrorism, or many others. The last of these will become a primary concern later on in this paper.

Returning to Wallace's psychological analysis, if this fifth requirement of revitalization, "cultural transformation", is successful, a period of "routinization" must follow. In order to make the change of the system permanent, the members must assimilate a new value structure and accepted division of labor. This can then become stabilized if it achieved a new state of equilibrium, meaning that the system returns to Wallace's first stage of "steady state".

Wallace explains this process of psychological change with a basic, underlying "principle of conservation of cognitive structure". Essentially, an actor in a society, though faced with the pressures of disequilibrium and recognizing the system's dysfunction, will maintain their conception of reality unless they have the opportunity to create a new one or are presented with an ideology that offers a viable replacement. Until this switch occurs, and as long as disequilibrium persists, they will react to societal stressors with anxiety and denial (Johnson 1982, 114-115). This highlights the importance of ideology in the development of a revolutionary movement. The instance of disequilibrium places psychological and sociological pressure on individual members that makes the formulation and adoption of alternative ideologies more meaningful and more likely. This ideology can unite previously dispersed members into a single, goal-oriented group that, with a formulated strategy, is capable of posing a viable revolutionary threat to the power-holding elites whose authority has been lost.

Chalmers Johnson, with the help of existing literature on social systems theory, psychology, and political philosophy, combines the structural (disequilibrium), global

(exogenous sources of change), and individual levels of analysis to form a contingency theory of revolution. Each framework explains a different component of revolution that, when combined, are better able to explain their interdependence. One without the other will give only an incomplete understanding. In keeping with this approach, it is constructive to consider more recent theories of radicalization. By examining these in relation to Johnson, we can identify where they overlap and complement one another, allowing for a more comprehensive examination of the circumstances of Islamist terrorism today.

### *Theories of Radicalization*

One of the most researched topics relating to terrorism seeks to understand who terrorists are. Where do they come from? Do they share certain qualities that predispose them to violent action later in life? Are there psychological explanations for their movement to violence? Many scholars have devoted their studies to creating a profile for terrorists, or a “Terrorist Personality,” revealing the “psychological forces” that move them to violent action (Sageman 2004, 69). These are the stereotypes common to a Western understanding of an Islamic terrorist, for example, that most are poor and desperate, from third world countries, relatively uneducated and therefore more vulnerable to “brainwashing and recruitment” (Sageman 2004, 80). However, studies have shown that these types of generalizations actually tend to be incorrect and a “terrorist personality” has struggled to find support through empirical analyses (Sageman 2008, 16). Therefore, scholars such as Marc Sageman claim that one is not predisposed to be a terrorist, but rather there is a process influenced primarily by “social, economic,

political, cultural, and historical factors” (2008, 21) in which an individual’s experiences take place (McCauley and Moskalenko 2008).

Clark McCauley and Sophia Moskalenko define radicalization as a “change in beliefs, feelings, and behaviors in directions that increasingly justify intergroup violence and demand sacrifice in defense of the in-group” (2008, 416). It is important to recognize that radicalization is a *process*, and not a single decision (Sageman 2004, 61-98; King and Taylor 2011). King and Taylor contribute to this discourse by presenting five theoretical models popular among radicalization scholars and analyze their similarities and differences. Four of the five of these models are linear and progressive while the fifth shows four interacting factors. All five, however, acknowledge that radicalization occurs progressively (2011).

McCauley and Moskalenko present this process in a pyramid model in which base sympathizers are located at the bottom and the higher levels of the pyramid contain fewer members with increased levels of radicalization of beliefs, feelings, and behaviors (2008, 417). This brings the question of *how* an individual moves from the base of the pyramid to the apex.

As discussed, many scholars acknowledge that there are psychological factors at play within structural conditions that contribute to this process. It is now commonly acknowledged that terrorist subjects should be acknowledged as “normal” and rational human beings rather than psychologically troubled individuals, as evidence for a correlation between radicalization and these abnormalities has not been found (McCauley and Moskalenko 2008). This can be explained through the role of the traditional terrorist network, which promotes its best interest by being highly selective in its recruitment. It is

not helpful to their objectives if they accept individuals that are irrational and psychologically troubled. Rather, they look for highly intelligent individuals that are also extremely devoted to their cause (Sageman 2004, 61-98).

Additionally, Johnson speaks to this in his work, stating that “revolution is purposeful, goal-oriented behavior, intended to overcome dissynchronization” (Johnson 1982, 114). It is the actors that are considered socialized and non-deviant under circumstances of equilibrium that are disoriented when the system becomes dysfunctional. It is their rationality and cognizance that motivates them to find means by which they can correct their situation, of which the elected solution may be the adoption of a radical ideology.

Taking this assumption of rationality into account, McCauley and Moskalenko identify different levels of radicalization: individual, group, and mass radicalization (2011). For the purpose of this theoretical overview, I will focus on the individual and group levels. At the individual level, there are certain factors that are considered to be crucial to this progressive personal change. The majority of individuals involved in terrorism first find themselves in a situation of isolation or social alienation. An example would be the experience of being a second or third generation immigrant living in a Western country. Here, the individual feels a crisis of identity in trying to reconcile both their religious and/or ethnic identity and further integration into Western culture (Sageman 2004, 93; McCauley and Moskalenko 2008; Weimann 2012; King and Taylor 2011).

This state of personal crisis is one identified among King’s work as common to many of the models considered, along with an experience of “relative deprivation”.

According to King, relative deprivation is the *perception* (not necessarily the reality) of being deprived relative to others, promoting feelings of injustice. This is not restricted to material possessions, but can occur in varying levels of social goods, such as rights and institutional protection. Sageman, who claims this experience is probably a necessary condition for terrorism, says this perceived deprivation leads to frustration resulting in aggression (2004, 95). King differentiates between personal and group-based relative deprivation, where group-based is a “stronger predictor of collective action and prejudice toward other groups” (King and Taylor 2011, 606).

In order to explain the importance of this deprivation among a group, we must first look at how an individual comes to find others with whom they share their discontent. King and Taylor found that a second factor in four of the five models is the acquisition of a group or socialization (2011). McCauley and Moskaleiko discuss this socialization at length, claiming that it is crucial to the radicalization process (2008). Individuals feeling isolated and experiencing personal crises seek out companionship and validation of their feelings of discontent through like-minded people (King and Taylor 2011, 606). One commonly studied example is that of Islamic religion, in which the isolated individual in a Western country finds companionship in a religious context with those that share their experiences or background on some level (Sageman 2004, 93). After joining this group, members are further radicalized through “group extremity shift,” a gradual increase in agreement among group members moving toward “increased extremity on whichever side of the opinion is favored by most individuals before discussion” (McCauley and Moskaleiko 2008, 422). This shift leads to greater group cohesion, creation of a collective identity, increased trust, and increased isolation of the

group from the greater society (McCauley and Moskalenko 2008; Sageman 2004, 149). Sageman refers to this retreat from society as a lack of “embeddedness,” or decreased connections between members of the group and their larger environment, forming their own “imagined community” (Sageman 2004, 147-149). In the context of global Islamic terrorism, “lack of embeddedness of the networks in any society allowed dramatic shifts in the ideological focus of the jihad movement in response to changing social conditions” (Sageman 2004, 150).

It is evident through the work of these scholars that the radicalization process on the individual level usually occurs in the context of group radicalization as well. It is the formation of these highly cohesive groups that creates the necessary conditions for joining a formal terrorist network or cause.

#### *Ted Gurr: Communal Conflict*

Following the success of his highly regarded book *Why Men Rebel* and his theory of relative deprivation, Ted Gurr has continued his studies of conflict. In a study published in 1993, he presented his findings on “Why Minorities Rebel” which explored the circumstances of political protest and rebellion by communal groups through statistical analysis. Using data collected on 227 communal groups from around the world, including indicators of group identity, disadvantages, grievances, and political action, Gurr was able to identify certain trends that help explain the circumstances under which they are more likely to rebel (1993).

Gurr acknowledges commonly held definitions of “communal groups”, those that view them as being based on sets of “genetic, cultural, linguistic, and religious givens, in

contrast to the states that govern them, which are held to be artificial entities established and maintained by coercion” (Gurr 1993, 162). Gurr adds to this understanding, saying that this collective identity is situational and may change when its circumstances do. For example, he states that external challenges, much like the endogenous sources of change discussed under Johnson, cause group identities to become more “salient”, whereas they are weakened under strong mechanisms of integration. Group identities are politically salient when they are subject to “systematic discriminatory treatment” or when political mobilizations arise to defend or promote interests that they are strongly associated with, such as minority rights movements (Gurr 1993, 163).

Gurr found that group disadvantages, including poverty, discrimination, and relative political or economic deprivation, are correlated with grievances and demands for political rights and also weakly correlated with protest behavior (Gurr 1993, 188). However, he finds that these disadvantages more often serve as the subjects used by leaders to garner support for a movement, saying that it is easiest to do so when the degree of disadvantage is high. In other words, rather than disadvantages serving as the immediate cause of rebellion, they more often serve as the foundation for new ideologies that are then able to encourage rebellion.

Gurr also finds it necessary to place these communal groups in political contexts, where he finds that institutionalized and well-established democracies will see more nonviolent activism among these groups, while states that are still in the process of democratizing are more likely to see protest and rebellion. In order to explain rebellious or revolutionary behavior among minority groups in established democracies, we can turn to Johnson. In his interpretation of Anthony Wallace’s psychological theory, Johnson

says that when revitalization occurs, those individuals participating have exhausted all other possibilities for correcting their disorientation available within the existing social and political structure (Johnson 1982, 110-12). Therefore, a well-established democracy that fails to provide practical solutions to disoriented behavior under disequilibrium, such as legitimate forms of nonviolent protest to which the state is responsive, rebellious or revolutionary behavior may become more likely.

### *The Importance of “Cliques”*

As has been discussed, group identities and dynamics are an active component of the radicalization process. Becoming a member of these groups is an important step on the path to dedicating oneself to terrorist agendas. Sageman refers to these collectives as “cliques,” “dense networks” formed locally that are based on “face-to-face encounters, attraction, and development of long-term bonds” (2004, 152). However, these relationships are not yet global. What is important to understand about the significance of being part of a smaller group first is that the incentive for “free riding” is significantly lower when “each member and each member’s behavior is known to others,” so a smaller group context is conducive to an individual finding the motivation to commit terrorist actions (McCauley and Moskalenko 2008, 417). This falls in line with Wallace’s requisite of “adaptation” during his revitalization stage, in which the revolutionary group not only becomes hostile toward their defined enemy, but also toward potential traitors within their ideology (Johnson 1982, 113). This makes the convert, still undergoing “hysterical conversion”, less likely to revert their ideological transformation and abandon the group. As the group has retreated significantly from society and a certain level of

group cohesion has been reached, the interpersonal devotion within the group reduces the tendency for “free riding” within the greater terrorist agenda and creates a psychological and emotional barrier for leaving the group once they have radicalized (McCauley and Moskaleiko 2008, 422).

Where, then, does the larger terrorist organization or network come into play? The greater terrorist networks are formed through complex social connections, but the instance of active recruitment techniques has not been shown to be very common (Sageman 2004, 121-122). Rather, “recruitment” often occurs through this cohesive group, where a member has a connection, whether personal or indirect, to the organization or their ideology, and the group chooses to seek out membership in the terrorist network *collectively* (Sageman 2004, 112). Political Scientist Donatella della Porta has referred to this process as “block recruitment” (McCauley and Moskaleiko 2008, 421).

While the intricacies of specific terrorist networks are fascinating and of particular interest today, this paper is more interested in how the subject moves from being a member of society to reaching the point where they are attempting to join the terrorist cause. For this reason, the details of the networks themselves will not be a focus.

### *The Role of Religion*

The explanation that religion plays a crucial role in the radicalization process has come under intense scrutiny over the past few decades, especially when related specifically to the practice of Islam. Identifying this factor as significant does not mean that all people that practice religion, or all those that are Islamic, will become terrorists.

Historically, religion has been a common unifying factor that has motivated conflict and war carried about by any number of different religious groups for centuries. What is significant here is the role religion in general plays on psychological and social processes. In a study of homegrown terrorists in the US and the UK, Daveed Gartenstein-Ross and Laura Grossman found that of the indicators for radicalization they identified, only one was found in the majority of their subjects, even when other factors were absent. This was the expression of radical *political* views, and was actually found to be a prerequisite to religious factors (2009, 8). This suggests that it is not religion alone that predisposes individuals to radicalization, but it is the politicization of their religious views that is significant. This politicized religious view falls under the definition of an ideology by Johnson's terms, as it contains certain political and social goals framed by an existing theology. In order to understand what causes a religious individual to ascribe to a political ideology such as this, it is necessary to analyze the historical and cultural factors present in the British case, which will be offered in the following chapter.

## **Chapter 3: Contextual Analysis**

### **Britain in Disequilibrium**

As can now be understood through Chalmers Johnson's theory of revolution, a society that reaches a state of disequilibrium is experiencing a break in the synchronicity of its value structure and socioeconomic environment. According to Johnson, this can occur through either endogenous or exogenous sources of change to one or both of these variables. In the British case, there are many examples of forces both internal and external to the country that had an impact on the experience of social and political life during the second half of the twentieth century. The most influential, and what will be primarily examined here, are the exogenous sources, to which internal changes were a reaction. These include the forces of immigration, international wars and conflict, interaction with outside cultures and actors, and the arrival of various religious clerics and their ideas. The following will demonstrate these changes with various examples.

### ***Exogenous Sources of Change***

#### ***Immigration***

Following the end of World War II, immigration to the United Kingdom sharply increased. Contributing to this influx were labor shortages, relatively few controls on immigration, and the provisions of the British Nationality Act of 1948, allowing for free entry of citizens of Commonwealth nations. Throughout the 1950s and 60s, many British immigrants entered from India and Pakistan, primarily due to hopes for greater economic opportunity. Later on in the 1970s, thousands of Asian immigrants were allowed into Britain following their expulsion from African countries due to harsh implementation of

‘Africanization’ policies (Abbas 2010, 20). As a result of immigration over the course of these few decades, the British Muslim population sharply increased. It is estimated that in the early 1900s there were close to 10,000 Muslims living in Britain (BBC 2009). Today, there are about 2.8 million Muslims, making up 4.6% of the British population (Pew Research Center 2014). Most of these citizens either immigrated during this period or are descended from those who did, as immigration controls implemented in the years directly following their arrival stemmed the flow substantially.

As the immigrant population increased, various demonstrations of violence and unrest related to racial discrimination arose, which, falling under the category of “deviancy” by Johnson’s terms, are indicators of disequilibrium. This suggests that the “homeostatic processes” that Johnson finds characteristic of healthy social systems were not able to correct the impact of immigration on the society and bring it back to equilibrium. Johnson claims that this process is only possible when the population is still capable of a certain degree of value sharing, something made extremely difficult when multiple cultural backgrounds pour into a single framework over a short period of time.

Anticipating social and political costs, it was clear that immigration reform was necessary. In 1962, the passage of the Commonwealth Immigrants Act introduced controls to immigration of Commonwealth citizens and required the possession of work vouchers for entry. Throughout the next few years, growing support for further immigration controls led to a lower number of available work vouchers and to the second Commonwealth Immigrants Act in 1968. This legislation introduced even stricter regulations, requiring immigrants to provide proof of their familial relationship with a current citizen or someone that was born in Britain (either a parent or grandparent) and

largely disqualifying many of the previously permitted Commonwealth citizens (The National Archives 2014). The Immigration Act of 1971 increased the strength of controls, switched from a voucher system to work permits, allowing only for temporary residency, and offered assistance in the repatriation process were citizens interested in pursuing it. This series of immigration reforms can be considered forms of conservative change, demonstrating that the British government became aware of the disequilibrium caused by the high rates of immigration and chose to take political action. The policies the state chose to pursue also show a slow movement in the direction of a conservative political outlook on immigration.

### *Globalization*

When integration was first acknowledged as an issue requiring priority in the wake of such a high level of immigration, there was an assumption among British politicians that the immigrant populations would naturally assimilate to some degree. After the immigrant generation, subsequent British-born individuals would easily be integrated into British society, attending school, learning English as a primary language, and living in areas of ethnic diversity. However, this assumption did not consider issues of group identity and the extent to which these individuals could potentially identify with their country of origin (Abbas 2010). Understandably overlooked was the impact technological innovation would have on the availability of affordable travel, fast and free-flowing communication, and easily accessible information (Brighton 2007, 13). This ability to connect with others across long distances has facilitated the creation of a global community independent of geographic boundaries, much like those characteristic to the

contemporary radicalization process. This will be discussed in the section considering the individual level in the British context.

### *Endogenous Sources of Change*

#### *The Thatcher Era*

Under the government of Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher from 1975 to 1990, many changes in state policy further impacted the disequilibrium of the British system from within. Most notably were changes in the state's approach to the economy and welfare in the midst of a damaging recession. One of the most significant changes seen in Thatcher's administration was the implementation of the technological and productive innovations of the time, both exogenous sources of change to the environment, which began a reform of the country's industrial operations. While this meant higher productivity, and a lessening of the gap between the production levels of Britain and other countries in the region, it also contributed to a sharp rise in unemployment and income inequality (Cassidy 2013).

The unemployment rate in the U.K. averaged 3.3 percent between 1980 and 1995. This average rose to 9.7 percent between 1980 and 1995, demonstrating that the policies and reforms of the Thatcher era had lasting consequences on joblessness in the country (Cassidy 2013). Unemployment was felt disproportionately for different groups and made worse by the increased incidence of homelessness due to the deregulation of housing and cuts to social security (Farrall 2006, 260-261). This range of impacts contributed to an impressive rise in poverty, with the rate jumping from 13.4 percent in 1979 to 22.2 percent in 1990, the final year of Margaret Thatcher's time as prime minister (Cassidy

2013). Thatcher also led a movement toward more strict requirements for income support eligibility, which is considered by many to have deepened social divisions and experiences of deprivation while prolonging the experience of poverty (Farrall 2006).

With regard to the rise in inequality, Stephen Farrall, a scholar of sociology and law, argues that the rise in the period between 1979 and 1985 was primarily a result of the increased unemployment seen throughout the country. However, from 1985 to 1990, this gap continued to grow due to government policy (Farrall 2006, 263), which would support Johnson's assertion that disequilibrium and a resulting power deflation will be prolonged and exacerbated by inadequate policy change.

As will be further explained in a later section, these changes in the social and economic structure of the British system during this period impacted some groups more severely than others. Ethnic minorities, especially, carried this burden, which came to be framed by Thatcher's publically expressed negative and harsh views of immigration and the marginal communities it had created (Farrall 2006, 264). With knowledge of the contempt this administration had for these groups, it is understandable that a contentious relationship would arise and continue to breed distrust throughout the following decades. This lack of trust often leads to a loss of authority for the ruling elites among the disillusioned population; an event Johnson claims is vital to the rise of a revolution.

## **Conservative Change and the Loss of Authority**

### *Multiculturalism in Britain*

With the recognition that immigration controls were necessary also came the need to establish ways in which these new British citizens could easily integrate into society; action that, if successfully executed, would fulfill Talcott Parsons' previously discussed four functional needs. Beginning in the 1960s, a discourse emerged among the British government and its politicians about the implementation of multiculturalism policies. Multiculturalism is based on the promotion of integration as a process involving both the majority population of the country and the minority groups in question. This process requires that both groups acknowledge their distinct cultural backgrounds, rather than focusing on racial differences, and accept that they share equal statuses of citizenship. Both sides are meant to participate in a reciprocal relationship where it is the responsibility of the majority community and "established society" (or the existing institutions of the country) to facilitate immigrant integration as much as it is the responsibility of the immigrants themselves. Following the ideology presented by Home Secretary Roy Jenkins in a speech he delivered in 1966, this process of integration should not cause all citizens to conform to a single idea of British citizenship, but rather it should create a shared space in which cultural diversity exists in an environment of "equal opportunity" and "mutual tolerance" (Brighton 2007, 5).

Multiple British governments following the 1970s expressed the idea that multiculturalism was an ultimate goal for society, though clear legislation on the national level acknowledging this plan was never created. Instead, control of the concept was left to local governments and departments concerned with varying social policy initiatives

(Brighton 2007, 6). Tariq Modood, one critic of British implementation of multiculturalism, has said that this initiative can only be successful if it is seen as an issue of “pluralistic integration” where the integration process is accepted as being distinct for each group rather than conceptualizing a single pathway for everyone to follow. He says that these cultures must remain permanently separate from one another in a political space where each group is able to communicate their concerns through representatives that can sufficiently contribute to their being understood, recognized and protected by the larger institutional framework (Brighton 2007, 6).

Therefore, suitable institutions and the government must play an active role in ensuring that multiculturalism is successfully being pursued. Using Parsons’ ideas, this means that “socialization” of the immigrant population and their children would require an institutional framework to encourage and facilitate daily interaction and adoption of common values through multicultural schooling, social opportunities, and, more personally, through family dynamics. To allow for Parsons’ “adaptation to the environment”, the establishment of these institutions would necessarily involve the restructuring of roles to include these new members, socially and economically, which would in turn lead to changes in the status hierarchy and societal norms. Following these changes to the division of labor, “goal attainment” would still require that political institutions grant inclusion of the immigrant community and proof that their concerns are being considered on the local and national level. The most significant of Parsons’ requirements, “integration and social control”, would similarly rely on the system’s institutions in order for value sharing across these cultural and ethnic divides to be maintained (Johnson 1982).

It is arguable that these necessary links between the Muslim immigrant population and these institutions were either not present or were inadequate leading up to the turn of the century, especially with regard to policies protecting Muslim identity within the context of British citizenship. Various events throughout the final decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century demonstrate these shortcomings and reveal a possible explanation for the lack of Muslim integration seen today.

### *Racial and Ethnic Discrimination*

Through his historical analysis of various events in British history since the decades of high immigration following World War II, Shane Brighton demonstrates that the issue of multiculturalism has only shown to be an issue for the central government in times of crisis (Brighton 2007, 6). One issue of particular significance is the historically contentious relationship between the British police and minority populations throughout the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. One of the most notable examples is that of the Brixton Riots of 1981. Throughout the 1970s, an issue of growing public concern was the perceived criminality of the poor Black communities throughout London. The urban police force answered this concern for black crime with increasingly aggressive policing in these neighborhoods, utilizing ‘sus’ laws (an informal term that originated from “suspected person” [Oxford English Dictionary 2015]) permitting them to arrest individuals solely on the basis of their suspecting imminent criminal activity. In 1981, plainclothes officers stopped 1,000 people and arrested 150 over a ten-day period in Brixton in what was called “Operation Swamp”. The community responded with two days of violent protest, drawing international attention (Jefferson 2012, 8). Lord Scarman famously responded to the riots with the Scarman Report, commissioned by then Home

Secretary William Whitelaw, in which he found that the riots were a spontaneous response to widespread distrust and resentment of the police, largely due to their consistently heavy and aggressive presence in these lower-income Black neighborhoods around the city of London. His recommendations that there be changes in police training and methods of enforcement, as well as increased recruitment of ethnic minority officers (BBC 2004), was well-received by the British Afro-Caribbean community because it acknowledged this “state-sanctioned discrimination” as a barrier to further integration into British society (Brighton 2007, 6-7).

Elimination of the ‘sus’ laws occurred shortly after, but the police were able to gain stop and search powers in the following years through new acts and policies, under which they were able to continue their disproportionate policing of Asian and Black citizens, especially youth (Jefferson 2012, 8). This led to further violent demonstrations by the Asian and Black populations throughout the following decades, demonstrating that despite acknowledgement of the issue of institutional racism in the Scarman Report, the country failed to implement effective reforms. The same issues were identified in the investigations following the murder of Stephen Lawrence in 1993, and a similar lack of reform followed (Jefferson 2008, 9). The inability of the government to answer these instances of “status protest” with any type of political action is an example of their failure to institute conservative change by Johnson’s standards. By his model, we can expect a power deflation to increase among these communities as a result of this inaction.

In the spring and summer of 2001, violent and large-scale protests by minority groups emerged in the areas of Bradford, Oldham and Burnley, once again drawing international attention to racial discrimination within these communities. Numerous

investigations were commissioned in response, including the Cantle report, which attributed the unrest to high levels of segregation and a lack of ethnic diversity in these areas, arguing that the people of Britain were living “parallel and polarized lives” (BBC 2001). The reports made recommendations on how the issue should be handled by policy reform, especially with regard to education, housing, political leadership, and youth clubs, pointing specifically at the issue of faith-based schooling. The government and the Home Office acknowledged the issues at hand and expressed a need for greater identification with a common British citizenship (BBC 2001).

These towns are just a few of the many post-industrial communities throughout the country that have highly isolated Muslim populations. During the period of high immigration following World War II, these industrial towns attracted Muslim immigrants to job opportunities, like those provided by the mills in the town of Dewsbury. Though these mills were shut down and many jobs were lost, the majority of these immigrant families remained. In Dewsbury itself, more than 80% of the population was still Muslim as of 2008. The town houses one of the largest mosques in all of Britain, considered to be the base of the organization Tablighi Jamat, which MI5 has long suspected of being connected with terrorist activity. One of the bombers involved in the 7/7 bombings in London in 2005 is known to have frequented this mosque, and many other supporters of the group across Europe have been linked to various terrorist plots (Watson 2008, 78-79).

An Islamic school in the town that is linked to the mosque was investigated in 2005 out of concern for the quality of education that it was providing to its pupils. It was found to be deficient in the instruction of “National Curriculum subjects”, giving a much greater priority to religious instruction (Watson 2008, 79). This is not entirely surprising,

due to the religious homogeneity and the relative isolation of the town from the larger British society. Most of the Muslims in Dewsbury are Deobandis, practicing a branch of Islam that is linked to the Taliban and ideals of Islamic purism. Fundamentalist Deobandis believe that it is necessary to separate themselves from the lives of non-Muslims as much as possible, making the visible segregation between the community and the rest of Britain a product forces internal and external to the town itself. Including the school in Dewsbury, there were 27 Deobani schools in the UK as of 2008 (Watson 2008, 79-80). This case is only one example of the experience of many similar communities throughout the country.

In the years following the 2001 protests, a wide rejection of multiculturalism spread through the political community and the government began promoting a commonly recognized British identity in its place. Home Secretary David Blunkett explained this new initiative by stating that there are “norms of acceptability” in Britain and “those who come into our home—for that is what it is—should accept those norms” (Joppke 2004). This shift in rhetoric, coupled with the national attention given to ethnic minorities in the wake of the 2001 protests and 9/11, could be considered a form of intransigence on the part of the government as it arguably did more to single out these groups than it did to promote integration, creating a discourse focused on differences and the need to mitigate them rather than the creation of social cohesion and protection of individual liberties.

#### *Social and Economic Disadvantage*

As Shane Brighton discusses in his work, despite efforts to implement policies to eliminate discrimination of minority populations in employment opportunities,

unemployment is still disproportionately higher in these groups. While there is evidence that minority groups experience social and economic disadvantages in general, additional data shows the situation of Muslim communities in particular may be significant.

Elevated rates of poverty, unemployment, and social exclusion have been observed among the British Muslim population since their initial immigration in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Data from a 2001 census showed that Muslims had the highest rates of disability and health problems of all religious groups, as well as an unemployment rate of 15% (17.5% for Muslims between the ages of 16 and 24). The same census showed that around 38% of Muslims lived within the city of London and were “highly concentrated spatially” in all the areas in which they were established (Reed 2005, 4).

In addition, a 2005 study showed that Muslims, particularly of Pakistani and Bangladeshi origin, consistently perform much worse in communication, language and literacy tests than other ethnic groups, with their academic attainment level resting significantly under the national average (Reed 2004, 6). However, it is worth noting that Muslim participation in higher education is on the rise, and in 2005 it was estimated that there were 90,000 Muslim students in British universities and colleges. Of individuals under 30 years old, those that were born in the UK were two times as likely to have higher education degrees than those born elsewhere (Reed 2004, 8). There is plenty of numeric data showing the ongoing marginalization of minority groups in British society, demonstrating that integration of these populations has not been effective to the point that they can enjoy economic and social opportunities equal to those of the larger population. However, the data also shows that some aspects of their participation may be impacted more than others.

### *The Rushdie Affair*

Arguably one of the most significant events of the 20<sup>th</sup> century for British Muslims was the aftermath of the publication of *The Satanic Verses* in 1988. The book, written by Salman Rushdie, is a fictional story based on the life of Mohammed and the founding of the Islamic faith that included various elements that Muslims throughout the world found to be highly offensive to their faith. Violent riots took place throughout Muslim communities and the Ayatollah Khomeini, or the Supreme Leader of Iran, called for the killing of the author of the book and all those involved in its publication. Many claimed that the book was blasphemous, leading the UK Action Committee on Islamic Affairs to bring the issue to the House of Lords, which ruled that the anti-blasphemy laws in Britain could only be applied to the Christian faith and were not relevant in this case (Brighton 2007, 8).

This event was the product of both endogenous and exogenous forces, seeing as Rushdie himself was a British citizen and that his work sparked a global commentary that came to impact the British Muslim community even more than the original work had. The political demonstration of Muslims throughout the U.K. in response to this issue led to the culmination of a large-scale, public recognition of an innate conflict in adopting both a Muslim and British identity. When moved to defend their Muslim tradition, it became more apparent than ever (not only to these individuals, but to the larger population, as well) that there might be a more serious barrier to integration due to irreconcilable cultural differences. This is yet another indicator of the persistent divide between the value structures of minority communities and that of the general British population.

Though a sizable public discourse ensued in the aftermath of what became known as the Rushdie Affair, various events concerning British foreign affairs quickly overshadowed any need for a political response, particularly British participation in the Bosnian War between 1992 and 1995 (Brighton 2007, 8). This failure on the part of the British Government to acknowledge the domestic issues at hand, coupled with the inability of existing British law to protect the religious equality of their minority populations, contributed to a significant shift in their political relationship. Anthony McRoy argues that it was at this point that a “longstanding, highly secularized Muslim community” realized that its “integration within a secular state had proved no guarantee of security” (Brighton 2007, 8). The consequences of the British government’s response to this event can, therefore, be considered a moment in which the state lost a great deal of its authority among its marginalized Muslim population.

#### *Limits to Political Participation and Integration*

Significant structural deficiencies exist in the political participation and representation of British Muslims, a problem exemplified in the case of the Muslim Council of Britain. The Council was established in 1997 as an independent organization representing more than 250 different local Muslim organizations and groups. The government initially saw this as an important step in creating an open dialogue as a pathway to greater understanding between policy makers and the Muslim community. The organization seemed to offer leadership for the larger Muslim community that had been lacking in this relationship, though it proved ineffective and potentially damaging over the next decade.

A central issue to this form of representation was that there is substantial fractionalization and conflict within the British Muslim population. As Lorenzo Vidino discusses in his work, Muslim communities are “internally divided by ethnicity, language, sect and political opinions”... which has caused an inability to “produce a common leadership” that can adequately represent their views (Vidino 2011). According to a study by the Open Society Institute in 2005, within the British Muslim population there are 56 nationalities, 70 languages spoken, and more than 1,200 mosques in which they practice their religion daily (Dyke 2009, 7). While not always true, powerful leadership within these smaller groups is often driven by theologically conservative religious figures that have little interest in integration and tend to contribute to their experience of marginalization within British society and that of the larger Muslim community (Khan 2010). That a single entity was entrusted with communicating the needs and views of a divided population was problematic, and even more so as individuals connected with Jemaat-e-Islami, an Islamic group ideologically similar to the Muslim Brotherhood, seemed to monopolize leadership of MCB itself (Vidino 2011). The impact of these more radical religious groups will be further discussed in the section on ideology.

In the aftermath of September 11<sup>th</sup> and the 7/7 Bombings, interest in the understanding and prevention of radicalization increased, and isolating the causes for this phenomenon quickly became politically and socially divisive. MCB, in delivering public statements and investigations on the topic, largely placed the blame on the foreign policy initiatives of the government. Most British officials responded by saying that insufficient weight was given to the role of Islamic ideology and leadership within Muslim

communities, and many argued that the leadership of MCB was using the situation to further its own interests rather than presenting objective research that could inform political initiatives and working to denounce radicalization within their own communities. It became clear that the opinions of the MCB did not represent those of all Muslims or of the various organizations it claimed to speak for. Surveys of British Muslims in 2006 showed that only 4-6% felt that they were represented by MCB (Vidino 2011). Soon after, the government publically moved away from its support for the organization, stating that it would only support groups that promoted and adhered to “non-negotiable” British values in the future. These events demonstrate that, while the British government has often acknowledged the need for Muslim representation and leadership in bridging the gap between policy and the British Muslim experience, this has not yet been executed adequately enough to make a substantial difference in participation.

As these statistics, as well as those showing marginalization and a sustained flaw in the country’s immigration mechanisms, serve as indicators that whatever conservative change was attempted by the power-holding elites was inadequate. Whether this was due to intransigence on the government’s part or due to the ineffective nature of the actions taken, the problems of poor integration and marginalization persisted.

## **The Individual in British Disequilibrium**

### ***Public Opinion Among British Muslims***

As was discussed in the theoretical framework chapter, Wallace’s “principle of conservation of cognitive structure” asserts that individuals may recognize the

dysfunction of society and be dissatisfied, but they will not change their conception of reality until another is presented or they have the opportunity to create a new one. This conception will come most potently in the form of a guiding ideology. However, prior to considering the ideologies available to the disenchanting Muslim population in Britain that led many to radicalize, it is first necessary to demonstrate that they were indeed dissatisfied and increasingly disassociated with their British identity.

In a compilation of attitudinal profiles from 2001 to 2011, Clive D. Field presents quantitative data from 27 different national opinion polls in order to capture the views of British Muslims over this period. Of those surveyed, four-fifths of young Muslims said that they identified more with their religion than their ethnicity, a much higher proportion than older Muslims answering. When asked whether they opposed marriage to non-Muslims, 55 percent said yes, demonstrating some internal sense of a need for social distinction by religious background (Field 2011, 162). 41 percent said that they identified themselves first as Muslim and British second, with that number rising to 48 percent just following the 7/7 bombings. One-third said they felt they had more in common with Muslims abroad than with non-Muslims living in Britain. 25 percent said that they believed there was a conflict between their loyalty to the Muslim *umma* and their loyalty to Britain, with 15 percent saying they found it impossible to identify as both Muslim and British (Field 2011, 165).

Two-fifths said that they believed their religion influenced where they were able to live and one-third admitted that they preferred to live near other Muslims. On the topic of integration, three-fifths of younger Muslims said they thought Muslims as a whole needed to integrate more into British society, with one-quarter disagreeing (Field 2011,

165). The majority of those polled said they were concerned about stop-and-search policies and discrimination, with those over the age of 25 being twice as likely as older Muslims to say they had experienced police discrimination. 25 percent of younger Muslims also said that they believed the government was “anti-Muslim”, citing the unfair use of anti-terror laws to their communities (Field 2011, 168-169). The majority of those answering said they believed the relationship between Muslims and non-Muslims had deteriorated after the 9/11 attacks and in 2004 there were already 42 percent of young Muslims claiming they suffered regularly from “islamophobia” (Field 2011, 169). These statistics show that in the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, there was evidence of a divisive relationship between Muslims, non-Muslims and the British government, with many saying they experienced discrimination based on their religion. This is indicative of feelings of isolation and a crisis of identity, which are symptomatic of an individual’s experience of systemic disequilibrium.

This crisis of identity, often seen as crucial to the radicalization experience, can take place in an environment where learning about and connecting with their religious roots is easier than ever before. Individuals are able to seek out information that can contribute to self-persuasion, something McCauley finds characteristic of those undergoing radicalization. These individuals need more and more reasons to justify their developing radical ideas and, eventually, actions (McCauley and Moskalenko 2008, 420), and the growing supply of information that could function in this way only made this step in the process less challenging.

Possibly even more important is the argument Faisal Devji makes in his book *Landscapes of the jihad*. Due to immigration and the forces of globalization, a fracturing

and reordering of the Muslim population has occurred internationally, creating a “global landscape” suitable for what we now see as global jihad (Devji 2005). Devji claims that this wide dispersion has made possible an ideology “that can be immediately accessed, understood and acted upon by anyone minded to do so, anywhere and without expert mediation or authoritative mandate” (Brighton 2007, 13). People around the world, previously unconnected, can access a broader community through mass media and social networking that communicates an experience of Western domination and vengeful motivation. These technological innovations and the resulting ease of cross-border communication can be considered exogenous sources of change to both the value structure and the socioeconomic environment. When combined with the pressures of immigration that had already brought the British system to a state of disequilibrium, the country’s dysfunction was only made deeper and more complex.

In the British experience, the perceived lack of protection of their religious values and the alienation felt by the rejection of their Islamic heritage by society in the wake of events like the Rushdie Affair or 9/11 may have led individuals to seek out the global Muslim community—one that understands the difficult immigrant experience and reinforces a belief in an inherent “schism” between Islam and Western culture (Gartenstein-Ross and Grossman 2009). Through modern means of communication, identifying with this “imagined community” can come to mean much more than the relationships formed in their domestic context. As Devji observes in his analysis of al Qaeda and the 7/7 bombers, the most important motivation to terrorist activity was the feeling of a “communal responsibility” to protect and defend their “Muslim brothers and sisters” (Brighton 2007, 14). The ease with which individuals within Britain could

connect with this global community is crucial to the ways in which some dealt with their crisis of identity. Even more crucial, however, was what this process of identification meant and the ideological weight that it carried.

### *The Spread of Ideology*

In addition to a rise in deviant behavior, Johnson also says that an identifier of a state of disequilibrium is the dissemination of ideologies. As has been discussed through Johnson's interpretation of Anthony Wallace's theory and through various theories of radicalization, the role of an ideology is vital to bringing a socialized member of society to radical terrorist action. Something important to point out here is that Islam in general is not the functioning ideology in this radicalization process. Rather, there are extremist sects of Islam whose interpretations of religion have become highly politicized and violent when compared to other branches of the religion. Therefore, it is necessary to identify what these ideologies are and how they came to have so much power among disenchanting British Muslims.

In his article in a 2008 issue of *Granta* magazine, Richard Watson shows how he found through extensive research a direct, though complex, link between Egyptian Sayyid Qutb and the ideology driving today's Islamist terrorists. Qutb, having developed anti-Western sentiments and a commitment to an Islamic revival, became the intellectual leader of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood as it was founded in 1928. The group positioned itself against colonialism and the imperial rule of Britain and called for a unified group of Arab states that would be governed exclusively by Islamic law. Qutb, through his teachings and the publishing of several books, claimed that any barrier or

opposition to this goal would have to be removed by force, including the existing state (Watson 2008, 41). Following his execution in 1966, many of his followers fled the country, among them his brother who went on to Saudi Arabia and continued spreading Qutb's ideas. One follower, Omar Bakri Mohammed, went on to join Hizb ut-Tahrir in Lebanon, another group with the aim of establishing an Islamic caliphate. In 1986, he arrived in the United Kingdom as a political refugee and chose to establish an international branch of the group in London, which would later become the al-Muhajiroun, modeled after a group of the same name that he had previously started in Saudi Arabia (Watson 2008, 43-45).

Throughout the 1990s, Bakri Mohammed traveled around to towns and cities with large Muslim populations to share his ideas and garner support through those he was able to convert. He lectured in schools and utilized religious communities in mosques, giving the greatest attention to young Muslim boys. Another influential ideologue was Abu Qatada, a proponent of the Islamic doctrine of takfirism. Qatada came to the UK from Jordan in 1993 seeking asylum, as did many other Islamic extremists not only from Jordan, but from Saudi Arabia and the Maghreb region, as well (Watson 2008, 51). By visiting mosques and speaking in inner-city youth clubs, Qatada was similarly able garner support from many young British citizens, some of which had been Muslim and others who converted to Islam as a result of his teachings (Watson 2008, 52-58). These youth clubs, and the schools and mosques visited by Bakri Mohammed, were the areas in which "cliques" of radical Islamic converts were able to form, a stage of radicalization considered to be critical by Sageman and many of the other theorists previously referenced. While the spread of these clerics' influence is significant and identifiable, it is

important to consider the impact of events abroad on these relationships and the efficacy of their conversion efforts.

### *Impacts of Globalization on Radicalization*

Watson makes sure to highlight the global nature of the spread of the terrorist ideology and the ways in which international networking have propelled its growth (2008). This network was facilitated by exogenous changes to the environment through technological innovation in communication and through cultural contact, each of which is capable of impacting the value structure. Furthermore, Johnson finds that a rapid circulation of ideologies is characteristic under a state of disequilibrium and power deflation created by the various sources of change discussed previously (Johnson 1982, 88). With communication becoming increasingly swift, and with the rise of international networks of relationships, this diffusion of ideas becomes even more efficient.

As these ideas were first being introduced to British communities, there were certain international events that made the timing of the conversion efforts opportune. For example, the impact of civil war in the Balkans, the repercussions of the dissolution of Yugoslavia, and conflict in Chechnya created opportunities for British Muslims to identify with and sympathize for the suffering of Muslims abroad (Watson 2008, 45). Shane Brighton discusses in his work the impact of the conflicts in Bosnia and Kosovo and the way they were perceived by British Muslims just following the events of the Rushdie Affair. These foreign conflicts meant that for the “longstanding, highly secularized Muslim community” of Britain, “integration within a secular state had proved no guarantee of security” (Brighton 2007, 8). Bakri Mohammed and other clerics were

able to exploit these associative feelings and channel their anger into these extremist dogmas.

Taking into consideration their identification with the global Muslim community, it is reasonable that the British Muslim population would react to events involving Islam abroad, particularly those in which British foreign policy is involved. Beyond the events occurring at the time of Bakri Mohammed and Abu Qatada's conversion efforts in the country, even more incidences have been added to the list of possible frustrations over the past few decades.

There is wide recognition of the negative perception among British Muslims of Western involvement in both Afghanistan and Iraq, as well as the role of Britain in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. In an aggregation of 27 national surveys conducted between 2001 and 2009, Clive D. Field finds that the "War on Terror" was perceived by 81 percent of young British Muslims as a war against Islam in 2004, though this number decreased to 60 percent in 2006. 72 percent of Muslims surveyed in 2002 disapproved of British involvement in Afghanistan and in 2004 85 percent disapproved of the war in Iraq, with about 75 percent stating that they were dissatisfied with Tony Blair as Prime Minister. In 2006, when asked which political issues were most important to them, 15 percent said Iraq and 12 percent said foreign policy in general. With regard to British policy concerning Israel and Palestine, 54 percent of Muslims surveyed in 2005 said the Jewish community in Britain had no interest in the difficulties facing Palestinians and 50 percent believed they have "excessive influence over British foreign policy" (Field 2011).

The impact this dissatisfaction had on the level of radicalization at this time is demonstrated in numerous cases of British Muslims that went to Afghanistan to fight

against Western intervention, including Munir Farooqi. Following his time in the Middle East, he returned to the UK to begin his attempt at recruiting other British Muslims to fight with the Taliban. He was able to create a network through which he charismatically used various teachings, texts, videos, and his own experiences to inspire more individuals to radical action. He was convicted, along with a few of his recruits, in Manchester in 2011 (Pantucci 2011a). However, this trial and other similar stories of British fighters in Afghanistan revealed the possibility of many such individuals in Britain and abroad, and of the yet undiscovered extent of their network (Pantucci 2011b).

By highlighting these international events along with the disadvantaged experiences of Muslims within Britain, many religious teachers were able to emotionally affect the young individuals in these marginalized communities in much the same way Ted Gurr found leaders mobilized the communal groups of his research (Gurr 1993). The significance of this strategy lies in the power of an individual's perceived social and political identity, making clear the ways in which it facilitates the radicalization process under the correct circumstances.

#### *A Supportive International Environment*

Many British Muslims were encouraged to go to the Balkans and fight with the mujahedin, an honorable option for supporting the *umma* made affordable by the increased ease of travel at the time. When these individuals returned from fighting, they were received as respected heroes by these Muslim communities and had created relationships with other radical individuals during the conflict, which only served to strengthen their resolve moving forward (Watson 2008, 45-46). Others became motivated

by the conflict between Pakistan and India over Kashmir or by foreign intervention in Afghanistan and Pakistan (Watson 2008, 81). Whatever the source of frustration, there were numerous instances of Muslim suffering from which to choose.

Due to the role Pakistan played throughout the war in Afghanistan, there was a well-established and extensive network of fundamentalist madrasas, or Islamic schools, throughout the country that had educated and trained a significant portion of those that fought in the Mujahedin. Many were even supported by the CIA throughout the 1980s for this purpose. Bakri Mohammed realized that these preexisting networks could be utilized for the training of British al-Muhajiroun members, and in 1999 he sent some of his closest British followers to start a branch in Pakistan (Watson 2008, 62).

In 2001, a man acting as the media spokesman for the al-Muhajiroun in Pakistan claimed that 100 foreign fighters had already come through Pakistan to train and to fight with the Taliban, 60 of which he said were British (Watson 2008, 63). That same year, when the US Special Forces and the Northern Alliance attacked the Taliban following the 9/11 attacks, the resulting humiliation to the group only helped to fuel the British members of the jihadi effort (Watson 2008, 64). By 2002, the spokesman said more than 200 British citizens had gone through this expanded network in Pakistan, demonstrating the rate at which support had been growing among British Muslims (Watson 2008, 66).

The leaders of this initiative slowly realized that terrorist missions and suicide bombings in Afghanistan, which had been a focus, were not furthering their cause in the ways they had hoped. Out of this realization and the discussions that followed came a decision to refocus their efforts and plan attacks on the British state from within. Just a few short years later, the bombings on the London transportation system on July 7, 2005

devastated the country, bringing the government and its intelligence operations to realize their shortcomings and causing a dramatic change in counterterrorism efforts, as will be discussed in the coming section on the use of force.

### *Exogenous Change and the Rise of Homegrown Terrorism*

Terrorism, especially that based in violent Islamic jihad, was once perceived as being executed by foreign-born agents trained abroad who entered into other countries with the purpose of carrying out premeditated and coordinated attacks. Now, however, the greatest threat comes from primarily second- and third-generation immigrants that have been born, raised, and radicalized within these Western countries (King and Taylor 2011).

Previously well-structured groups played an influential role in the increased prevalence of this type of terrorism. For example, when al Qaeda's network began to suffer from the targeting and loss of much of its first-, second-, and third-generation leadership, it began actively encouraging sympathizers to stay in their home countries rather than travelling to join their organization, as physical movement posed a much higher risk of being tracked by government surveillance. Instead, they suggested that these people individually plan and carry out attacks within their countries, engaging in what has come to be known as Lone-Wolf Terrorism (Weimann 2012). Evidence shows that since 2003, the majority of homegrown European operations have been developed and run independently from other formal organizations (King and Taylor 2011, 613). Without the support of this larger terrorist network, and facing the threat of surveillance of physical meetings among sympathizers, communication through social networks,

Internet forums, and chat rooms has become crucial to the maintenance of jihadist ideals, regardless of temporal or spatial constraints.

This online exchange of ideas was initially much more difficult for surveillance efforts to identify and created a new community accessible to a wide range of people across these Western states, generating more and more opportunities for individuals predisposed to radicalization to connect. Gabriel Weimann discusses the relevance of online interaction in his work, demonstrating that having a virtual “pack” behind individually conceived operations is crucial to their success. Weimann claims that “90% of terrorist activity on the Internet takes place using social networking tools,” which offer protection of individual identities, spaces for radical propaganda primarily targeting young people, and an opportunity for individuals to contact representatives of the terrorist movements in which they are interested, asking questions and contributing to the now global conversation of “cyber jihad”. The processes previously taking place in physical spaces have now migrated to a virtual environment, free of geographic constraints, relatively elusive to detection, and arguably capable of intensifying feelings of camaraderie and disclosure considered necessary to radicalization (Weimann 2012).

### **Accelerators and the Use of Force**

As Johnson presents in his model, once a power-holding elite faces a decline in authority and an increasingly disillusioned populace, a deterrence relationship arises between leadership and people that is dependent on the elite’s use of force. As a power deflation continues, “accelerators” pose a direct threat to the elite’s maintenance of control. These are certain events that make clear the loss of the elite’s monopoly of armed

force (Johnson 1982, 101-106). In the British case, the primary force combating the rise of terrorism and the threats it poses to national security are the state's intelligence operations, rather than a traditional military force. In the wake of the 7/7 bombings, the various branches of British intelligence and government become abruptly aware of the ways in which they had underestimated the threat of these radical actors to national security. These events and the information demonstrating the inability of intelligence operations to deter these attacks function as accelerators within the British context.

It is now known that MI5 had been monitoring Sidique Kham, the leader of the London bombings, and other terror suspects long before July of 2005, but they had been dismissed as posing little threat to the state since their efforts seemed to be focused primarily on Pakistan and other areas abroad (Watson 2008, 69). British authorities successfully stopped another attack planned for July 21 of that same year, though it was realized that the leader of this plot, Mukhtar Ibrahim, had also been under MI5 surveillance just one year previously and was similarly dismissed as non-threatening (Watson 2008, 76).

Going back even farther than these actors, MI5 was also aware of the conversion efforts of Abu Qatada and other preachers like him. An intelligence analyst source of Watson's claims these people were able to live and operate in Britain without intervention in the hopes that security officials would be able to gain even more valuable intelligence in exchange for their being left alone. However, it would seem that these tactics did not end up benefiting intelligence efforts in the ways they had planned. It is also possible, the source says, that MI5 was being given false or incorrect information over this period (Watson 2008, 59-60).

According to one source within MI5, intelligence officials were only becoming aware of the rapid growth of radical Islamist activity in the country as recently as 2003, by which time hundreds of British citizens had already gone abroad for training and recruitment (Watson 2008, 39). Sir David Omand, the government's intelligence coordinator from 2002 to 2005, has said that British Muslim radicalization had been monitored even before the 9/11 attacks on New York. Sir Paul Lever, a former chair of the Joint Intelligence Committee, has called this inaction a "failure of the imagination" on the part of the British government and its security services (Watson 2008, 39). However, knowledge of these processes was not sufficient to prevent attacks that no one could have anticipated at the time. It was difficult to prove criminal activity and much of the fundraising efforts for these radical actors and their followers were conducted through registered charities. The propaganda and spreading of ideology was not itself illegal, and before the 7/7 bombings the work being done by such individuals did not give officials reason to believe that any violent action would be taken against the UK itself (Watson 2008, 60). In short, preventing terrorist action, and the spread of radical ideologies that might contribute to such action, is an extremely difficult and complex task for intelligence operations, especially as they stood fifteen years ago.

Even outside of the intelligence organizations, many feared that accusing these individuals of threatening activity at the time would be considered a direct attack on a faith, something that could have further alienated an already marginalized population, even under the attitudes of multiculturalism at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Watson 2008, 81). Though this fear is valid, Watson claims that allowing these radicals to operate unhindered in the country for over twenty years strengthened their efforts, making them

feel “increasingly invincible” (Watson 2008, 81). Government inaction, along with the many factors contributing to the disadvantaged British Muslim experience throughout this period, only made the relative weakness of moderate Muslims more acute and decreased the likelihood that they would speak out against growing extremists groups (Watson 2008, 81).

Since the London attacks of 2005, a notable shift has occurred in the management of resources and in the effort of MI5 to catch up with the threat of terrorism in the country. However, the efforts of the intelligence community and the government in reaction to the attacks have taken place primarily in incidental areas, such as the expansion of counterterrorism laws, the introduction of laws allowing for detention without trial, and heightened surveillance measures (Watson 2008, 39-40). While these changes demonstrate that there is acknowledgement of the need to change the state’s approach to counterterrorism efforts, they still do not impact the marginalization of British Muslim communities in the country. Since 9/11, and even more so since the London bombings, there has been an increase in “islamaphobia” and more intellectual support for the War on Terror where there used to be a focus on more liberal innovation. This focus on fighting terrorism and, more specifically, Islamic forces, has served to create an even more divisive discourse in Britain. Jason Cowley, editor of *Granta* magazine, has said, “Britain has become a more troubled, less confident and harmonious country” since the attacks (2008, 7). A state that had already been suffering from systemic dysfunction and a growing loss of authority among its minority groups will not possibly see a return to equilibrium as long as this division continues.

### *An Example: “Jihadi John”*

At the close of 2014 and as 2015 began, there have been numerous stories covered by the media heightening British concern, particularly due to continuing evidence of the involvement of British citizens. One recent development has been unveiling the identity of so-called “Jihadi John” who is now known to be Mohammed Emwazi. Emwazi was born in Kuwait and raised in West London beginning at age six in a middle-class family (CAGE Editor 2015). He has a degree in computer programming from the University of Westminster and, after graduating, he attempted to travel to Tanzania with friends in 2009, but he was detained due to suspicion that he was traveling to Somalia to join al-Shabab, an Islamist extremist group. Once brought back to the UK, he was questioned by MI5 and placed on a “terror watchlist” (Taylor 2015). After this incident, he joined CAGE, which describes itself as an “independent advocacy organization working to empower communities impacted by the War on Terror” (CAGE 2015). He claimed that he faced a long period of “harassment” and “abuse” by the British government and its security agencies due to their suspicion of his terrorist involvement, culminating in his being banned from travelling to Kuwait where he claims he planned to start a new life. These experiences are what he considers the cause of feelings of severe anxiety and alienation (CAGE Editor 2015).

Various individuals have claimed that Emwazi’s connections to radical ideas began about five or six years ago. He was part of a group of individuals that attended the same mosque and often played football together, many of whom were found by MI5 to be connected with the men involved in the 21 of July bombing plot in 2007 (Cobain, MacAskill and Ramesh 2015). He has since become one of the leading members of the

Islamic State, most notable for his presence in numerous videos of displays of violence towards hostages.

Emwazi's story demonstrates how this process of radicalization can unfold. Though raised in Britain from a young age outside of the experience of poverty, and having earned a degree in higher education, he came to be part of this militarized group. Though we do not know all of the details of his story at this point, it seems that through experiences of isolation and perceived discrimination, small group connections with individuals linked to radical religious ideologies, and motivated by the experiences of his global Muslim "brotherhood", Emwazi came to be "jihadi john". By understanding the backgrounds of individuals such as Emwazi, we can understand a great deal more about the ways people accept and pursue radical ideologies. However, it is also important to remember that these individuals were members of a disequibrated social system that generated the situations in which they were more able to reorient their "mazeways", as Wallace calls them, and change their conceptions of reality.

### **Conclusion and Further Research**

As of 2008, MI5 reported that it was monitoring at least 200 known active indigenous terror cells in the country and that more than 4,000 British Muslims were

considered threats to national security (Cowley 2008, 7). Since then, we have seen more than a few displays of Islamist radicalism in action not only in Britain but also around the world. In the past year alone we have seen a significant rise in the Islamic State's global presence and the attacks on Charlie Hebdo in France, along with a number of other events, have led the global community to its current position, constantly attempting to formulate plans for protection from, and solutions to, the modern threats nations face.

While the world attempts to confront the spreading influence of Islamist terrorism, the most crucial issues are those that pose a direct threat to the state's national security, especially those that have grown from within the state itself. This examination of the British experience has demonstrated that there are many variables involved in the rise of such a situation. Each of these may be isolated and analyzed as independent from the others, placing a focus on immigration policies, integration through schooling, the presence of radical churches and societies, or the faults of national intelligence. However, extensive study or political energy put into any one of these areas independently can only lead to an incomplete understanding of such a complex issue. Rather, each component must undergo a study of its independent influence in the context of its interdependent relationship with the others. Chalmers Johnson's theory of revolution offers such a framework, demonstrating that there are structural, individual, and global levels of analysis from which such a phenomenon must be understood.

In the context of the rise of homegrown British terrorism, exogenous and endogenous sources of change shifted the value structure and the socioeconomic environment out of alignment, such as the increase in immigration and internal policy change under Margaret Thatcher. Due to a failure of the evolutionary processes found to

be characteristic of a healthy social system in homeostasis, this misalignment brought about a state of disequilibrium. The resulting dysfunction of the British social system is evident in the rise of crime and status protests, especially among isolated ethnic and racial minority communities. Such demonstrations of discontent are also evidence of a power deflation, wherein these protesting groups increasingly become disillusioned and mistrustful of the ruling elites and their related institutions.

Though the ruling parties acknowledged deficiencies in integration mechanisms and recognized the disproportional instance of poverty, crime, and unemployment among these minority communities, no policy change sufficiently adequate to mitigate the situation was put in place. Not only have these communities been isolated socially, but they have also been isolated from the political process, as a functional system for representation of the British Muslim population has not yet been realized. As the power deflation has continued, it has been exacerbated by the influence of various global events impacting the British Muslim view of their home society. Western intervention in conflicts concerning Muslim populations abroad, the perceived suffering of the *umma*, increasing “islamophobia” in the wake of attacks such as 9/11, and cases like the Rushdie Affair have led to a loss of authority for the British power-holding elites in the eyes of their Muslim citizens.

As these groups gradually have lost their faith in their place within the British framework, religious teachers, often from abroad, have introduced radical ideologies, capable of harnessing their dissatisfaction and framing it within the rhetoric of an irreconcilable dichotomy that poses the global Muslim community against the British system and its Western counterparts. Various theories of radicalization have been used to

explain the ways in which small group dynamics, often in religious schools, youth organizations, and schools, allow these ideologies to take root and deepen the collective resolve to take radical action. The forces of globalization and the lasting impacts of the war in Afghanistan laid the network through which these small groups in Britain were able to connect with terrorist cells and their relationships in Pakistan and other countries in the region. These cross-border relationships have created a global web that is further strengthened, expanded and diversified by the globalizing forces of technological innovation and its resulting facilitation of rapid and evasive means of communication. Through this constantly adapting network, radical Islamist ideology has itself been able to circulate and expand, evolving into the threat we see today.

According to Johnson, when authority has been lost the relationship between the elite and this group becomes dependent on the elite's control of force. In the British context, the forces utilized to fight the terrorist threat have primarily been the country's intelligence organizations. Over the past fifteen years, however, information has slowly come to light demonstrating that intelligence operations have been inadequate in their fight to protect the nation from terrorist action. These moments of realization have served as accelerators to the deterrence relationship brought about by the loss of authority. They have given radical opposition groups of these disenchanted British citizens and groups to which they are connected a sense that the British government and its tools of force are incapable of stopping efforts of insurgency. The resulting rise in the confidence of terrorist organizations with British roots is an ongoing phenomenon that can explain various attacks of Islamist terrorism, including cases like that of Jihadi John and those to which he is connected.

While this is a complex and interdisciplinary view of the British case, it can offer a more complete understanding of Islamist radicalization in this country and potentially shed some light on the experience of other nations similarly affected. This analysis shows that internal and external influences to the social experience and the division of labor may cause dysfunction, but the parties in power can correct it through adequate policy change. It is when these policy efforts do not prioritize the successful integration, socialization, social control, and reconciliation of the various goals valued by its citizens that the dysfunction will worsen. Met with a power deflation and, potentially, a refusal on the part of the dissatisfied populace to recognize their government's authority, a society arrives at the point where its leaders are finally acknowledging of the gravity of their situation. However, this acknowledgement is most likely left unproductive, as authorities are unable to formulate a complete and coherent solution in which their citizens can place their full faith once again.

It is difficult, if not impossible, for a state to prevent the circulation of new ideas. However, it should be the priority of the state to make the ideologies that support a unified nation of organized diversity more attractive and satisfying than the revolutionary alternatives. This can only occur if the values of the population and those of the power structure consistently reflect one another. At the base of this understanding is the view that the people and their government are in a reciprocal relationship, wherein one grants authority and the other privileges. This balance between the values of society and its social and economic structures can be maintained through the evolutionary processes Johnson identifies within homeostatic equilibrium, though this requires the reciprocal relationship itself be sustained.

These central values naturally differ across cultures, meaning that this analysis cannot possibly prescribe any specific policy initiatives. Instead, this study can suggest that a government be cognizant of the values of the people it represents and receptive to their changing through time. It is necessary to point out that such a society, based in priorities of communication and cooperation, will most likely be characteristic of a democratic political structure. While this study on its own has not addressed the significance of differences in political structure, such a topic is worthy of future study.

In conducting a study of this sort, the consideration of a range of subject countries would be beneficial to deepening this understanding. It will be most important to apply this model across cultural differences in order to demonstrate that it can explain a variety of state experiences. Finding a single and significant commonality from which one could expand to conduct a comparison study would be helpful, whether it be similar political histories, cultural similarities, regional associations, political structure, specific experiences of terrorism, or any number of other factors.

For example, due to its relationship to this issue and its relevance today, France would be a perfect case study within which this approach may be used. The work presented here, being restricted temporally, has not incorporated the experience of this notable country. However, this work would benefit from such a comparison, as France is the only other European country that has seen a larger proportion of its citizens moving to join the ISIS movement. In fact, as of March of 2015, this number was double that of the British case, estimated at 1,200 individuals (Sharma 2015). There are important differences between the French and British cases that would make such a study revelatory. For example, the two countries saw differing approaches to secularism over

the past half-century, the French being much more focused on strict secular policies and the British often more focused on a multicultural rhetoric. Despite this difference, they have arrived at similarly troubling situations. This is but one example of an interesting and relevant extension that could potentially come from the understandings contributed by the work presented here.

The topic of terrorism and its role in transforming global politics will continue to be significant and consequential in the years to come. What this study can conclusively offer is the importance of approaching these future studies with an interdisciplinary respect for the interrelated and contingent factors at play. Such work will require the consideration of all three levels of analysis—the structural, the global, and the individual—and the acknowledgement that no situation so global and evolutionary in nature can be understood fully by reducing it to an isolation of its basic components. Such complexity must be accepted and viewed as such so that we may come to understand the systemic and patterned qualities that collectively create its perceived chaos.

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